

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/TUR:MBHIRSHORN:EF

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

INFO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMCONSUL ADANA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJECT: OPIUM BAN

FOLLOWING LETTER APPEARED IN WASHINGTON POST, APRIL 27,
1974:

BEGIN QUOTE WITH REFERENCE TO THE ARTICLE BY JACK ANDERSON
IN THE POST OF 14 APRIL, ENTITLED "LIFTING THE TURKISH
OPIUM BAN," I WISH TO STATE THE TURKISH SIDE OF THIS
PROBLEM TO THE BENEFIT OF THOSE CONCERNED.

THE TURKISH BAN ON POPPY CULTIVATION WAS A UNILATERAL
DECISION. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL AGREEMENT SIGNED
BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES. NONE OF THE PRO-
DUCING COUNTRIES, OTHER THAN TURKEY, HAS SO FAR IMPOSED
A TOTAL BAN ON POPPY CULTIVATION.

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IT IS A FACT THAT THIS BAN HAS CREATED A DEFICIT OF 200 TONS FOR THE WORLD PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY. RESULTING SHORTAGE OF OPIUM IS NOW BEING COVERED BY INCREASED PRODUCTION IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.

SINCE THE BAN WAS ENFORCED, SUBSTITUTE CROP PROGRAMS AS WELL AS AGRO-INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES WERE INTRODUCED IN THE REGION. HOWEVER, NONE OF THESE PROGRAMS COULD ALLEVIATE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HARDSHIPS IMPOSED BY THE

BAN ON THE POOR POPPY GROWERS IN THE AREA. THE CASH COMPENSATION GIVEN TO THE FARMERS CREATED SOME RELIEF, YET OUTSIDE AID COULD NOT BE A BASIS FOR A HEALTHY ECONOMY OF THE REGION. IN THIS CONNECTION, I WISH TO SAY MOST EMPHATICALLY THAT THE ALLEGATIONS AS REPORTED IN MR. ANDERSON'S ARTICLE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE U.S. PAYMENTS WERE GOING INTO THE BOTTOMLESS POCKETS OF CORRUPT OFFICIALS ARE, TO SAY THE LEAST, UNJUST AND IRRESPONSIBLE.

IF THE BAN IS TO BE LIFTED, THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WILL ASSUME ALL RESPONSIBILITY OF FOOL PROOF CONTROL, TO LIMIT THE ENTIRE CULTIVATION FOR LEGITIMATE AND PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS. THE FINAL DECISION OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WILL BE TAKEN UPON CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF TURKEY'S LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC INTEREST ON ONE HAND, AND THE WIDER HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM ON THE OTHER. ANY OTHER ACCOUNT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED NOTHING BUT A SPECULATION NOT PERTINENT AT THIS STAGE.

ZEYYAT GOREN. PRESS COUNSELOR, EMBASSY OF TURKEY.
WASHINGTON. END QUOTE. RUSH

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